

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



HESITATION.

CROSS CURRENTS.

CHAPTER III.

"THE BOWER." To such a name is naturally attached a picture of some charming retreat, where woodbine and honeysuckle, clematis and other plants of poetic fame, entwine their tendrils and scatter their sweets. We may imagine it some favoured spot where, if life is not always perfumed with happiness, the external world must be rich in

beauty, the very centre of some interesting romance. To such ideas Tarleton Bower will appear a complete misnomer. The oldest inhabitant of the village never knew it called otherwise, yet no place could be less deserving of the name. It was a small house, a little bigger than a cottage, with the entrance door in the middle and a large bay window on each side of it, which rendered the two principal sitting-rooms equally cheerful. Situated about the middle of the village, it was separated from the road by a pretty

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garden and a fine piece of meadow land, and though without pretension of any kind, it seemed intended for the residence of gentry with small means. For more than twenty years it had been occupied by Piers's mother, the good-natured squire having placed his sister-in-law there ever since her widowhood.

For some days Mrs. Ashworth had been expecting her son, the best room had been long ready, and every preparation made that maternal love could devise. It is high praise to say that though she knew that Tarleton held for him a greater object of attraction than herself, her heart harboured no jealousy—she was one of those mothers who could forget self in the happiness of her child. The thought that did trouble her was from a cause she felt powerless to remedy. Her relations with Miss Hawtrey had never been unpleasant, but they had been superficial. Though nominally a boarder in her uncle's house, Clarice found "The Bury" dull, and was often away visiting friends and kinsfolk with whom Mrs. Ashworth was unacquainted. They had never become intimate, some barrier lay between them, nor could Mrs. Ashworth ever talk as freely to her as with Hope, child though she was in comparison with Clarice. She could not help thinking that Piers might have made a better choice, and before the engagement was quite decided she ventured to remind him that personal beauty was too fragile a possession to satisfy the heart, or too frail a foundation for the happiness of a wise man. Her mild remonstrance met with the usual result of material interference in such matters; it was borne down by the son's infatuation. He had loved Clarice Hawtrey from the first moment he saw her, and would rather risk his happiness with her than secure it with another. The anxious mother said no more; but by such counsel as she was permitted to offer when opportunity served, and still more by earnest pleading in her secret chamber, she sought to make that choice a happy one.

The letters at Tarleton were delivered late in the afternoon. Mrs. Ashworth on this particular day was sauntering about her garden, still gay with asters, geraniums, and autumn flowers, listening for the click of the gate which should announce the postman. She had done the same for several days, and been disappointed, but this time the desired sound caught her ear, and looking up, she saw the welcome individual, his leathern bag strapped round his neck and a letter in his hand, advancing towards her.

"The captain come at last," said he, giving her a letter with a foreign postmark. Like all the rest of the villagers, he felt a personal interest in Captain Ashworth's return. "I have another for the manor," he added, and trudged away, believing that he had left a fund of happiness behind him.

Mrs. Ashworth, perceiving that the letter was in her nephew's handwriting, felt a painful misgiving at her heart, and turning aside into a green arbour, sat down on a bench, and proceeded to open it with a feeling akin to fear. Nothing that she could have brought herself to conjecture would have come up to the dismal reality. Tears, such as she had never shed before, rolled down her faded cheeks as she read, not once, but many times, the painful narrative of her son's misfortunes. "Oh, my boy, my poor boy!—my dear, my poor son!" she exclaimed at intervals, as her intense distress permitted her to articulate. "Had God so willed, how willingly

would I have borne the trial instead of you!" Ray's letter was very kind, very sad. He had not attempted to lessen the poor mother's misery by words of vain condolence. He did what was much better. He promised her to accompany his cousin to Berlin, in order to see him placed under a celebrated oculist to whom Piers had been recommended. "If one eye can be saved, we must be thankful," wrote Ray, and then proceeded to give his cousin's message to Miss Hawtrey, a little modified since the first resolution was taken, but substantially the same. Miss Hawtrey was to be free if she wished it, and Mrs. Ashworth was to tell her of the sad event. Notwithstanding that Piers was forbidden to try his sight in any way, a few lines were enclosed, scrawled by him and hardly legible, which the miserable mother perused with an aching heart. They were not for her, but for Clarice. "What will she do for him?" Mrs. Ashworth could not refrain from asking herself the question. "I would give my sight for him. Will she give herself to comfort and take care of him?" Her spirit weighed down with the heaviness that has little hope to lighten it, Mrs. Ashworth sat still, heedless of the falling dew and of the deepening shadows. She could not move, for it seemed to her that the tightening about her throat and chest must end in suffocation under any roof lower than the canopy of heaven. She would not permit herself to rebel, yet, oh, how hard to submit! "My only son, my only son!" she kept repeating in an agony of tears, her eyes strained upwards as if relief must come from thence, until there came a pause in her grief, and an inner voice whispered of One who could sympathise in all human sorrow, of One who in his own life on earth had been spared neither suffering nor humiliation. In His long-tried goodness she had hitherto found consolation through many trials. "If only Piers knew Him too!" she murmured.

"Tea is ready, ma'am; you will take cold sitting here all in the dew and damp."

The speaker was Mrs. Ashworth's valuable Nancy, who, with the occasional aid of a charwoman, did all the work of the house and kept herself tidy besides.

"We shall not want Simmond's girl, the captain is not coming yet," replied Mrs. Ashworth.

"Have you had bad news?" asked Nancy, agast at the hollow tone of her mistress; her face she could not see, as Mrs. Ashworth sat in a recess of the arbour.

"He is not well, and remains abroad; he is going to consult some German doctor."

That was all she could say; the accident and the blindness she could not frame her lips to utter. At Nancy's second announcement that tea was ready, Mrs. Ashworth rose and tottered into the house, where, turning away from the parlour in which tea was prepared, she went upstairs and locked herself into her room. She did not leave it again until the following morning, when she despatched her note to "The Bury." Outwardly calm, Mrs. Ashworth prepared herself for the painful interview with Clarice, but the pallor of her sweet face, and the dark circles under her eyes, telling of a sleepless night, revealed plainly how much this fond mother had suffered.

From "The Bury" to "The Bower," by the shortest road, was a good half-hour's walk. There had been some delay in the delivery of the note, so that the morning was pretty far advanced when Clarice, accompanied by Hope, arrived. The first sight of Mrs. Ashworth alarmed them both. Instead of

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being occupied as usual, she sat in an armchair, her hands lying listless on her lap, and her head bent sorrowfully downwards. Though Clarice had come to hear bad news, she was so frightened and agitated by Mrs. Ashworth's appearance that she sank into the nearest chair without speaking, while Hope sprang forward, twined her caressing arms around Mrs. Ashworth, and tenderly inquired what was the matter? Mrs. Ashworth turned her eyes upon Clarice with a look of deep pity, and then clasping Hope closely, she murmured, "My dear little Hope, you will be a comfort to us all. My poor Piers has met with an accident, and is likely to be blind—perhaps totally blind. He has written a few lines to you, Clarice: but you had better read Ray's letter first, you will then more clearly apprehend Piers's meaning." She gave the letters to Clarice, who now stood pale and trembling at her side, and who on receiving them sat down at some distance off, in order to peruse them unobserved. Mrs. Ashworth gave her one kind, pitiful glance, and then rested her cheek on Hope's head.

"It's a heavy sorrow, but it comes from God," observed the widow, meekly; "we must bear it for His sake, and be thankful too," she added, after a pause, "that it is an accident, not sin and shame that we have to mourn. My poor Piers, the fondest affection can only mitigate, not cure a sorrow like yours."

Miss Hawtrey, having read the letters, remained apart, her head buried in her hands, still and silent. Hope asked permission to read the letters, and having done so, knelt beside Mrs. Ashworth and endeavoured to speak a little cheerfully. "There will be no more separations now," she said; "the captain will always be with you, and knowing the house and village so well, he will be able to find his way about—everybody will be glad to help him. He and Clarice will live with you, dear, and Piers will not be very unhappy after all!"

Hope comforted in her own way; she thought that with so many devoted to him, Captain Ashworth's life would not be so very dreary. In answer, Mrs. Ashworth laid her hand gently on her head and glanced towards Clarice. From that quarter there was no response, not a word nor a sound of any kind; the bowed head had never once been raised nor a single cry uttered. However deep her grief, she seemed inclined to bear it by herself.

Mrs. Ashworth, distressed that their common sorrow did not bring them more together, rose and approached her, saying, "Have you read *his* letter as well as Ray's?"

Clarice, raising her strained tearless eyes for a moment, pointed to it as if in affirmation, and then dropped her head again. Her look was so stony that Mrs. Ashworth did not know what to think.

"If you feel the lot too hard, remember he frees you from it," she observed; "and I, his mother, counsel you not to undertake what you know is beyond your strength. Some women desire nothing better than to devote themselves to the happiness of others. If your love for Piers is strong enough, accept the honouring title of wife to one so afflicted—it will be an angel's ministry; if you are not equal to the sacrifice involved, let my poor Piers know the worst at once. He will bear it better now than later."

Still Clarice did not move, but as Mrs. Ashworth was turning away she looked up and wrung her

hands, saying, "I am so miserable, so utterly miserable."

"And what am I? What is Piers?" answered Mrs. Ashworth.

As Clarice, without speaking again, resumed her drooping attitude, Mrs. Ashworth returned to her seat stricken and wounded that no thought of her son's trial or of his mother's sorrow had gained access to Miss Hawtrey's mind.

"The shock is very great. Poor Clarice! Give her time," whispered Hope, distressed at witnessing the bitter disappointment depicted on Mrs. Ashworth's face.

"True, true, may God forgive me, for I was judging harshly and had no pity for any one but Piers. Poor Clarice! she is young for such a heavy blow," responded the lady; and again rising, she seated herself near Miss Hawtrey, and putting her arm round her, laid the broken-spirited girl's head upon her bosom, saying in her sweet, soft voice, "Forgive me, Clarice, if I seemed hard. We each have a heavy burden. I am older than you, and having known what sorrow is, I ought to be able to comfort you. This blight is falling on the close of my life, but on the beginning of yours, and that is harder still. You know best what you can do. We must be merciful in our judgments of one another. I dare not plead for Piers; I dare not on an occasion like this—a crisis in two lives—put such a responsibility upon my shoulders. Examine yourself, measure the strength and quality of your affection. Is it equal to the strain put upon it? I cannot answer the question; you only can do that. All I say is, Decide as soon as you can, and put Piers out of his suspense. I write to him to-day; if you have a word to add, or any message"—Mrs. Ashworth spoke slowly, pausing between each sentence to read her mind, if possible—"I will send it; or would you rather wait?"

Hope, who expected Clarice to catch at the opportunity of sending some kind loving words to poor suffering Piers, even if she did not write herself, was surprised to see how calmly she listened to Mrs. Ashworth, and how eagerly she repeated her last words—that she would rather wait.

"Do not ask for more than a week; suspense will be so injurious to Piers," said Mrs. Ashworth, as Clarice, before going away, pleaded for time. "Let me tell him that you will write in a week."

Clarice hesitated; she was like a child that cannot believe what is disagreeable, nor weigh painful alternatives. She did not wish to give up the handsome soldierly Piers, nor did she feel any inclination to become a poor man's wife. The picture Hope innocently drew of her future life, living at "The Bower" with a blind husband and his mother, revolted her. She was full of pity for herself, and thought it unlikely to hurry her into a decision; but Mrs. Ashworth was firm upon that point, and Clarice, before returning to "The Bury," found herself pledged to give her final answer in a week.

After they were both gone, Mrs. Ashworth reviewed the interview with some misgiving. She could not overcome the suspicion that Miss Hawtrey possessed one of those thin natures to which grand emotions and the principles that beget them are strange and unintelligible. "Had Hope been in her place," she thought, and checked herself. Hope was but a child—a very engaging one, but yet a child. Every one thought so, partly because Hope

had grown up in Tarleton, and partly because her small stature kept her childish-looking.

Throughout her reflections Mrs. Ashworth tried to be just to Clarice, and to reason dispassionately, yet she feared more than she hoped. Clarice Hawtreys loved show, pomp, grandeur, and her own income was insufficient to gratify her tastes. How would she accommodate herself to Piers's straitened means, living on the sale of his commission, and on what his mother could add from her small income? Some, like Clarice, having £200 a year to add to the general fund, would not hesitate. But to brighten the path of others through gloom and difficulty, the light in their own soul must shine with a steadfast flame, and to do that, it must be fed by a more sacred oil than congeniality of taste, or the passionate homage that beauty loves to receive and man to offer.

As Mrs. Ashworth, almost unwittingly, weighed her daughter-in-law elect in the balance, and endeavoured to brush away foregone conclusions, an unfavourable impression again fastened itself upon her mind. Ray's letter was lying on the table where Clarice left it, and by its side the few lines penned by Piers, very short, but good and kind, written with difficulty, and for a noble, honourable purpose. The poor mother took it up, and read it again:—

"Dearest Clarice,—My mother will tell you what has happened. Though forbidden to use the pen, I must write you a few words. As I have nothing to offer you but sorrow, I dare not claim anything from you, and promise to accept your decision. I am truly a broken-down man, but not such a pitiful fellow as to wish to secure a little happiness for myself at the sacrifice of yours. I am, yours as you decide,

"PIERS ASHWORTH."

Across the paper, scrawled almost illegibly, as if the heart protested against the duty it had performed, were a few more words: "My darling Clarice, think of me sometimes, however this may end." Mrs. Ashworth's mouth quivered as she read the last sentence, and folding up the paper carefully, she placed it in her desk. To her, at least, it was a sacred relic.

CHAPTER IV.

"CLARICE, you must give your answer to-day. Mrs. Ashworth begs you will not defer your decision any longer. I am going to 'The Bower' now; shall I say that you will write to Captain Ashworth by the next post, or will you at once send a message through his mother, just to relieve the poor fellow's mind before your letter arrives?" Hope and Nina were sauntering with Clarice round the garden one afternoon, the former dressed for a walk.

"Cannot I have one day more to reflect?" said Clarice, turning pale; "it is so hard to decide. If I once say 'Yes' there is no drawing back."

"And who wants you to draw back?" said Hope, opening wide her innocent honest eyes. "Mrs. Ashworth requests you to put an end to her son's suspense, which she fears is increasing his sufferings, and perhaps aggravating the disease. You promised to give your answer in a week, and you have already exceeded the time by three days."

"Oh, if any one would advise me—if any one would tell me how I ought to decide!" said Clarice, piteously; "neither your father nor mother will give any opinion about it."

"Any opinion about it!" echoed Hope, in an accent of contempt; "it is a case of feeling, duty,

obligation—of anything rather than opinion. What are you made of, Clarice," she continued, warming with indignation, "that you hesitate so long? You must say 'Yes' in the end; you could not do such a heartless thing as to abandon Piers in his affliction; or even if you wished to do so, you would not dare show yourself so contemptible a woman. A little while ago you were looking forward to his return, buying your *trousseau* and talking of your life in India, now—no, no; for very shame's sake, if you have no better feeling, you cannot refuse to become his wife."

"I think it is rather romantic to have a blind husband," observed Nina (she was only seventeen, and though far from childish in some things, had no deep views of life).

"It will be poverty as well as blindness," sighed Clarice.

"But you will be leading a brave and useful life," said Hope, "helping Piers Ashworth to bear his sorrow, sweetening what must be a bitter trial to him."

"It is a decision for my whole life. Oh, what can I do?—what must I do?" exclaimed Clarice, clasping her hands together, her usually calm face expressing deep agitation, and her eyes strained and tearless. "The more I think about it, the less clearly I see my way."

"But where is the difficulty? You loved Captain Ashworth before this accident—do you love him less now? I should have supposed it would have quite the contrary effect," and Hope regarded her cousin with strange surprise. To her simple mind the difficulty lay in Clarice's hesitation.

"If I thought I could make myself happy—" began Clarice; and then reading undisguised reproach on Hope's countenance, she resumed, in a querulous tone, not unmixed with a sense of her own superiority, "It seems easy enough to you, I dare say, because you could be happy anywhere. I do believe that you never had a higher ambition than to spend all your days at Tarleton."

"True," replied Hope, with a laugh, pleading guilty to the charge, "I am something like the oyster, with no propensity stronger than to cling to my native place. If I had it in my power to do a little more for my poor friends and neighbours, I should wish for nothing more."

Miss Hawtreys's proud lip curled a little as she reflected that the life described was not the one suited to herself, though it might do very well for a homely girl like Hope, whose character, in spite of herself, she respected, though she often ridiculed her tastes.

Hope Wallis, being only two years old when her mother married Mr. Fellowes, knew the greater part of the cottagers and their children. She had played with some, taught others, and had a vivid memory of the hearty welcome received twice a year when she spent her holidays at Tarleton. Piers Ashworth she had not seen since she was twelve years old—a romping girl, always tearing her frocks and getting into scrapes, in which he often stood her friend. When last he was at home she was at school, and missed seeing him. Ray also was almost a stranger; she remembered him about five years ago, when little more than a stripling in appearance. With the fastidious taste of incipient manhood, he had found nothing either in her sister or herself to interest him, had rarely visited "The Bury," and went away leaving

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no very favourable impression behind him. With Piers it had been otherwise. Being of a different character from his cousin, and also older, he had no budding dignity to guard, and enjoyed a game of play with "The Bury" children as much as they did themselves. Hope could not recollect the time when Piers was not a favourite; she had often climbed his knee and bestowed on him many a proof of her childish affection. One of her earliest reminiscences was being scolded for running out in the snow to meet him as she saw him enter the garden-gate. Since then she had grown to the respectable age of twenty, and he had forgotten his former playmate; but something of her early preference still lingered about her, making her plead his cause with Clarice so earnestly that the vacillating character was swayed in his favour. Hope acted in the simplicity of her heart; she not only thought that Clarice would disgrace herself by breaking off her engagement with Piers, but that after inflicting such a disappointment upon him she would never be happy again. She had an upright nature, with little knowledge of life—none whatever of the compromises expediency often makes with principle. Though Clarice despised her country tastes, she was in her turn often discountenanced by her sturdy views of right and wrong. Her education, carried on in a second-rate school in a provincial town, had not added much to her natural advantages, nor cultivated what are termed accomplishments. Nina had given more time to them, and had some taste for painting and music, which, however, the limited means of the family prevented her from improving as much as her mother desired. Occasionally she obtained some assistance from Miss Hawtrey, who condescended, when at "The Bury," to instruct her; but as she was frequently absent visiting in town or elsewhere, these lessons were too interrupted to be very successful. Hope had neither time nor inclination to prosecute studies of this description. She was the active spirit of the household, at the beck and call of all who wanted her, and generally little regarded by her older and fashionable cousin, except when, on such occasions as the present, her truthful, honest nature asserted its supremacy. Through her influence Clarice was brought under the dominion of higher feelings than those to which she was inclined when left to herself. The selfish view of the matter not being allowed exclusive power, the old affection for Piers had space to revive. And so, at Hope's urgent entreaties, she gave her a few lines for Mrs. Ashworth to enclose to her son, and for a few days endeavoured to persuade herself that she had done right, and should be happy with the lot she had chosen.

With a light heart Hope started for "The Bower," pleased with her commission, and fully believing that she had done a good work in persuading her cousin to decide upon keeping to her engagement; well satisfied also to be the messenger to convey to her old playmate the assurance of such happiness as his afflicted state permitted. Mrs. Ashworth received the letter with a sigh of relief; her pale face flushed, and the involuntary response, "Thank God!" came from her lips.

Blind and wilful, we often thank God for granting that on which our hearts are set when we have had no sincere desire to submit ourselves to his will; yet the gift is sometimes only to teach us more self-surrender, and to trust more implicitly in the goodness of Him who, unlike ourselves, sees the end from

the beginning. When entering into the cloud, how difficult to be patient until we are out of it; and yet only by avoiding all undue haste are we sure of escaping by the right way. Mrs. Ashworth's maternal feelings were stronger than her judgment. For her son's sake she rejoiced in the decision Clarice had made, and sent back many kind messages by Hope. The distance was beyond her walking powers, or she would have gone to "The Bury" to express her thanks, but she begged Miss Hawtrey to come and receive them.

When Hope left "The Bower," the afternoon was too much advanced for loitering by the way, or visiting, as was her custom, some of the cottages on the road. She could only wave her hand and call out a word or two in answer to those who addressed her as she passed. Time was getting on, she must hurry homewards, as since it was known that the young squire was going to live at the manor, Mrs. Fellowes had persuaded her husband to renew the old tradition of a late dinner, that being in the lady's estimation a support to the social position she thought it desirable to occupy. Hope's steps were suddenly arrested.

"At your service, miss."

Old Jacob, unexpectedly turning the corner of the churchyard through which she was hastening, gave her his usual old-fashioned salutation. At that moment the dumb walls of the belfry resounded to a sharp clang, and there went forth through the clear air of that autumn afternoon a peal of merry bells, which, in such close proximity, were almost deafening. Louder and louder they rang their joyous greeting to the occupants of a carriage then ascending the road on the other side of the river.

"Mr. Ashworth?" said Hope, with an interrogating glance.

Jacob nodded and chuckled. "We've done it well this time, we have," said the old man. "The house-keeper sent us word he was to arrive this afternoon from Arkesden, so we easily calculated the time it would take him to come from the station. Jem Olney was to keep watch down below, and fire a gun when he passed his house, so that the ringers might be ready to go to work at the first sight of the carriage. They have done it well. Hoorah! Welcome to the squire!" shouted the old man, removing his hat.

Hope moved nearer the road, crossing the large churchyard in order to have a better view; but she was still too distant to distinguish more than that there were two dark objects inside the carriage. "Can Captain Ashworth be with his cousin?" she murmured, half aloud.

"No, no," answered Jacob, who had followed her; "the poor captain is in foreign parts, staying with some strange doctor. More's the pity; there is not much good in those foreign chaps, to my thinking. Only the squire is expected, not his cousin. Poor man! poor man! and he looking forward to his wedding. Well, harvest time is always a bad part of the year, and always brings sorrow to some one. I always say—"

"The accident occurred before the harvest moon was born," began Hope, guessing that the old man's ingenuity was at work to bring the two under the head of cause and effect.

"Wait a bit, Miss Hope, wait a bit. I am not so sure of that;" and laying the first finger of one hand on the large palm of the other, he began to

calculate. "The moon was at its full on the 6th of September, at nine minutes past nine in the evening; you see it must have been new moon just a fortnight before, that was the 23rd of August. I marked the day particularly, as soon as I heard of the captain's misfortune. That happened just before the captain was to start from Indy, after he wrote to say he was coming. Now what day did his letter get to Tarleton?"

"I really do not recollect exactly," replied Hope, who had not followed Jacob in his reckonings.

"How long is a letter coming from Indy?"

"Sometimes six weeks, sometimes longer," said Hope, amused with her old friend's pertinacity.

"And we have just begun October," observed Martin.

The dates puzzled him so that he took off his hat and passed his fingers through his scant grey locks, unwilling to be beaten, yet unable at the moment to arrive at a result tallying with his theory.

"Counsellor Franks and me, we made it out the other day, we did," said Jacob; "leastways it was very near."

"Anyhow you are right, Jacob, for it is always the same moon," replied Hope, wishing to help him out of his dilemma.

"It is not for me to contradict," he answered, "though I have heard that there are some moons besides ours. You know we sing about, 'The spacious firmament on high.' Very few people, in my opinion, know anything about it, notwithstanding all the big glasses they use. A chap that came here from London to receive the great tithes got talking once about the harvest moon when he was dining. I asked him no questions, for I don't believe that any one knows the truth about it, but I suppose some one else did, for they told me he said it was a phenomony—that is a dictionary word, Miss Hope, and means, as I take it, something uncommon—out of nature like. I believe no such thing. The harvest moon is sent us by the Almighty, and is a proof of his goodness. I read, 'He giveth fodder for the cattle, and green herb for the use of men.' Grass is the fodder for the cattle, but corn is the fodder for man. Now it is not enough for the corn to grow, it must be reaped also; and for that he sends the harvest moon, which ripens the wheat when cut a little too soon, and lets the men work late to gather it in. No, Miss Hope, I have now made up my mind to this, and believe there is more sense in old Jacob's explanation than in all that he has heard from others."

Hope, not being able to argue the point, did not contradict him; and having, besides, watched the carriage out of sight, she bethought herself of hastening homewards. "Good-bye, Martin; I must go home now as quickly as I can. I am sure what you say is right, only some people go deeper into the subject."

"Let them go as deep as they will, they will never come to the bottom of it otherwise than I do, that I know. Mr. Saunders told me that the moon went inside the 'quator.' Now I couldn't say he was not right, but it seems to me that if there is inside or outside at all it must be all outside."

"Coincides with the equator, I said," put in Mr. Saunders, who, having just joined them, had overheard the latter portion of Martin's remarks.

"Well, sir, coincide or go inside, it is all the same to me. My mind is made up to one thing,

and that is, the goodness of God to his creatures. He makes the sun to shine, the learned don't contradict that; well then, he makes the moon to shine too, and if he pleases to make it shine more convenient for us in harvest time, why I'm not the man to say he can't. Sorrow comes with it, but 'tis a vale of joy and tears."

Old Martin felt a little nettled by the smile on the vicar's face, and suspecting that there was more difference between the two words than he was disposed to admit, he twisted about his sentence until he had, as he thought, put his superior in the wrong. That done, he relaxed; nothing could be farther from his principles than disrespect to the clergy.

"Good evening, sir," he said, removing his hat, as if he had not observed him before; "we have timed it well, we have given the squire a proper welcome."

"Pray stop one minute, Miss Wallis. Are you in such a very great hurry?" asked Mr. Saunders, as Hope, after a hurried "good-bye," was turning away.

"I shall be late for dinner, and that is one of the very few offences for which my father allows me to be scolded."

"I will walk part of the way with you," said Mr. Saunders; "you can shorten the distance by going through the vicarage garden and across the fields."

In the old vicar's time Hope had done that without permission, and been reprimanded for it by the old housekeeper. She was about to say so, when the bells rang out again a few joyous notes, and then took up the old merry tune, "Oh, dear, what can the matter be?"

"They have about done now, they have; the bells are not what they used to be, nor are many things," grumbled old Martin, as, with a salutation more respectful than what his words seemed to imply, he went back to the church.

"Poor Martin, he has many things to forgive, and has not, I fear, come to the end of them yet. He does not like the congregation to make the responses, nor many other changes I shall be obliged to make. In his eyes I shall never be more than half a parson."

Mr. Saunders conducted Hope in the direction of the fields, and was offering to help her over the stile, an attention quite unappreciated, when the nurse and his baby appeared, still so called though more than two years old. Hope, whose sympathies were easily excited, forgot her haste, and stopped to caress it.

"I dare say Mrs. Fellowes will give me a cup of tea this evening. The bonfire is to be lighted in the castle orchard on one of the high mounds. I shall go for a short time to see that the lads do no mischief."

"I am sure she will; but you must be at 'The Bury' by seven o'clock. What time is it now?"

"A quarter to six."

With an exclamation of dismay Hope broke away quickly, soon accelerating her pace into a run. Dinner at "The Bury" was at half-past five—later than that Mr. Fellowes would not permit his wife to make it.

"What a pity she is such a child," thought Mr. Saunders, as he watched her lithe figure bounding along the path; "yet she has more sense than many a grown person."

When Mr. Saunders came to Tarleton, about five

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years ago, both she and Nina were children, or at least schoolgirls; as such he regarded them now. The five years so eventful to him, since in their course he had become a husband, a father, and a widower, had, he seemed to imagine, stood still for them. He had always spoken of them as "The Bury children," and, in his own mind, did so still.

"DULL AS LEAD!"

A SCHOOL RECOLLECTION.

I LOOK back to one day as the brightest in my school-life, miserable as it was at the time. On that particular day I had been in disgrace for what the tutor of my form considered my "obstinate determination not to conquer the simplest problem in Euclid!" I was "more stupid than usual," "duller than ever," "steeped in brutish ignorance," Mr. Smith declared, as he tried to make me understand the demonstration. Alas! the very abundance of his explanations, the very multitude of the words he used, seemed only to confuse and bewilder me more. What was perfectly clear to him remained, at the end of a prolonged lesson, a hopeless mystery to the unawakened brain of a boy of thirteen. Nay, I seemed farther off than ever from understanding it — "taking it in," he called it.

"Dull as lead! heavy as lead! dolt that you are!" he cried; "I have no patience with you! I am utterly sick of your stupidity!" and he rose from his chair, pushed it away, and flung the book to the other end of the room, casting a look of contempt at me which seemed positively to wither me up.

How long I remained with my head buried in my hands, feeling that I was a hopeless blockhead, a dull useless fool, I know not, when a large hand laid a kindly grasp on my shoulders, and a deep voice sounded in my ears—"Why, Burton! what's the matter? Down again, my boy! What is it? Tell me your trouble." I knew—though in my misery the voice sounded strange and far off—that it was the doctor himself, our head master. "Dull as lead," heavy as lead indeed I was, mentally and physically, yet a spirit of recklessness came over me at that moment. I started to my feet and poured out in a torrent of words my bitter distress at my inability to learn anything. I had tried; I could try no longer. Oh, it was not that I *would* not, but that I *could* not learn. Mr. Smith said I was a dolt and a fool; so I was. I didn't care; I couldn't help it; I was sick of working, of trying my best and hardest when nobody believed that I did so. I wished I was dead. Sitting down I buried my face in my hands and gave myself up to my misery. The doctor seemed so surprised that he did not interrupt my tirade, but stood as if in deep thought, and then after a few kindly words dismissed me.

This incident was the turning-point in my school life. The very next day, after "roll," the doctor, in a short speech, announced his intention of taking into his study for an hour every evening, after the regular work of the day was over, as many fellows with dull brains and heavy hearts as chose to go to him for an hour's hard working. "The acceptance of this offer rests with yourselves," he said; "only one condition I must insist upon: any who agree to come must not let anything interfere with their attendance. A certain amount of courage will, I dare say, be required in

any fellow to close with this offer, when I tell you honestly that I will only accept in this my class a dull boy, 'dull as lead, heavy as lead.' Any man," he added, with a scarcely perceptible glance at Mr. Smith, "can teach a clever lad, but give me a dull intellect to brighten. Once get it to open, and then, like the dawning light of day out of the blackness of night, it marches on right royally."

Thus was inaugurated that famous "Leaden Class," to which so many owe their success, and much, if not all, their happiness in after-life. But it did require greater effort than even he counted upon for a boy to step forward and give in his name, thereby stamping himself at once as "no better than a fool!"

But well was that effort repaid. With what unvarying patience, with what gracious assiduity he worked with us! "Amor omnia vincit" was his motto, and surely his was the love that never failed. The dullest of his pupils, steeped as some of us were in mental lethargy, could not help "catching" some of the earnestness which filled his great heart. He never for one moment confounded the distinction between "education" and "instruction." While avoiding the mere grinding at dry details, hammering on the anvil of an irresponsible mind with that tedious routine, wearying alike to teacher and taught, his highest aim was to "educate," "*educere*," draw out, rather than to "furnish," put in. He wiled from his unpromising boys, whose capacities other masters estimated at the lowest, powers of thought and mind which, but for his gentleness and care, would have been utterly lost. His was the clear lucidity of explaining difficult and intricate subjects, his the terse, luminous illustration which brightened all he touched, his that power of training the mind to feel and observe the excellence of whatever study he might be engaged in, to draw out and cultivate the warm human affections of a quelled and stunted growth—this was the teaching to which he gave up his evening hours.

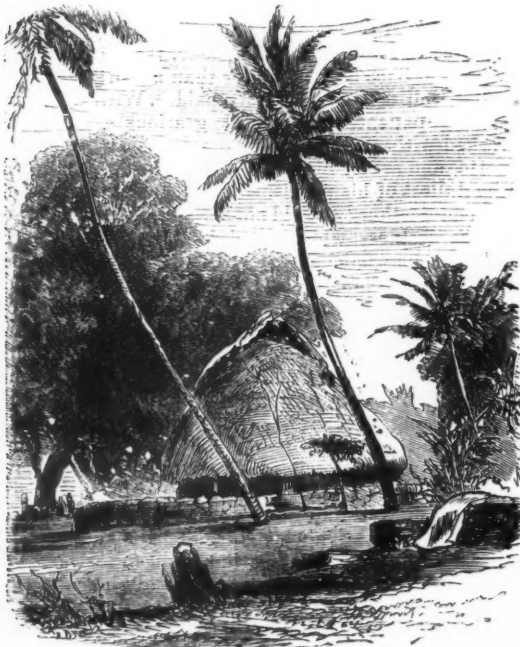
No wonder "Old J.'s Leaden Class" adored him; no wonder that they preserved, amongst much of the roughness and selfishness that invariably prevails at a large public school, a gentleness, a self-forgetfulness, a readiness to help any one in need, that many who shrank from enrolling themselves amongst the "ignoramuses" certainly did not possess.

For himself he was wont to declare that, in the deep loving gratitude of his "leaden boys," in the knowledge that by his exertions the "stuff" within them was transmuted to gold, the bright influence of that higher inner life which actuated him touching them also, he was repaid a thousandfold for the care and pains he bestowed on them.

FIIJI.

THE annexation of Fiji will establish a strong centre of British influence in the midst of the populous islands of the South Pacific Ocean. As in New Zealand, so in this new possession, the dark rule of cannibalism was first broken by the advent of unarmed missionaries preaching the gospel of Christ in its simplicity. The conquest of Fiji from savagery to comparative civilisation will always remain among the most heroic chapters in the history of missions. We have already in these pages given a full account of the islands, and the changes by which they have been brought into their present state. It is enough now

to repeat that, consequent on the labours of the Wesleyan missionaries, an external trade sprang up, which was presently followed by the appearance of white colonists on the scene, attracted by the climate and the soil, and no longer deterred by fears of the inhabitants. New settlements were formed, and with the increase of commerce the need of a stronger government has been urgently felt. There was no central authority strong enough to govern the mixed



THE ROYAL HUT.

community or to protect it from aggression, and while the savage tribes were driven into the interior, often lawless whites nearer the coast proved as difficult of control. The British Government for a long period declined the responsibility of annexation, but at length sent out a commission to inquire into the condition of the islands. Finally, the preliminary difficulties having been overcome by their unconditional cession, to which the king and the leading chiefs have subscribed, the English flag was hoisted over them in September last, and they have become an integral portion of that empire on which it is sometimes proudly said the sun never sets. Meanwhile the islands have acquired an additional importance as a coaling station on the new mail route between San Francisco and the Australian colonies and New Zealand. We cannot but hope that their annexation will speedily lead to the complete suppression of the iniquitous slave trade, encouraged by cotton-planters, in these seas.

We have received several communications concerning our new colony. The first, from an old resident, relates to Kandavu, the port at which all steamers call.

KANDAVU.

Kandavu (pronounced Kan-dāh-voo) has recently come into notoriety through being the place of call for the great mail steamers that run between San Francisco and Australia. It is one of the largest islands in the Fiji group, and lies well away to the southward. It is a delightful place to come to after

tossing about on the ocean with nothing in sight but the salt waves and wearisome horizon of water and sky. The shape of the island and outline of the hills is picturesque, and the towering form of Nabukelevu (Mount Washington), at the extreme western end, is very fine. The writer never will forget the impression made upon him when sighting Kandavu. As the ship neared Nabukelevu (which name being interpreted is "Great Yam Hill"), a glorious scene struck upon the view, and majesty and exquisite beauty were charmingly united. The land first appeared as a dusky conical mass just looming in the dawn through a rain-mist. The wind bore us rapidly to it, and then a fine sight opened up. A mountain mass stood out in bold relief from the adjoining land. Presently the granite giant became clothed in living green, and a magnificent robe of colours, rich and varied, glorified its form like the mantle of a king. On the heights appeared light graceful feathers waving, which, as we drew nigher, developed into tall palms, and down by the golden beach was a beautiful skirting of those most graceful of trees. Last of all appeared

"The league-long roller thundering on the reef,"

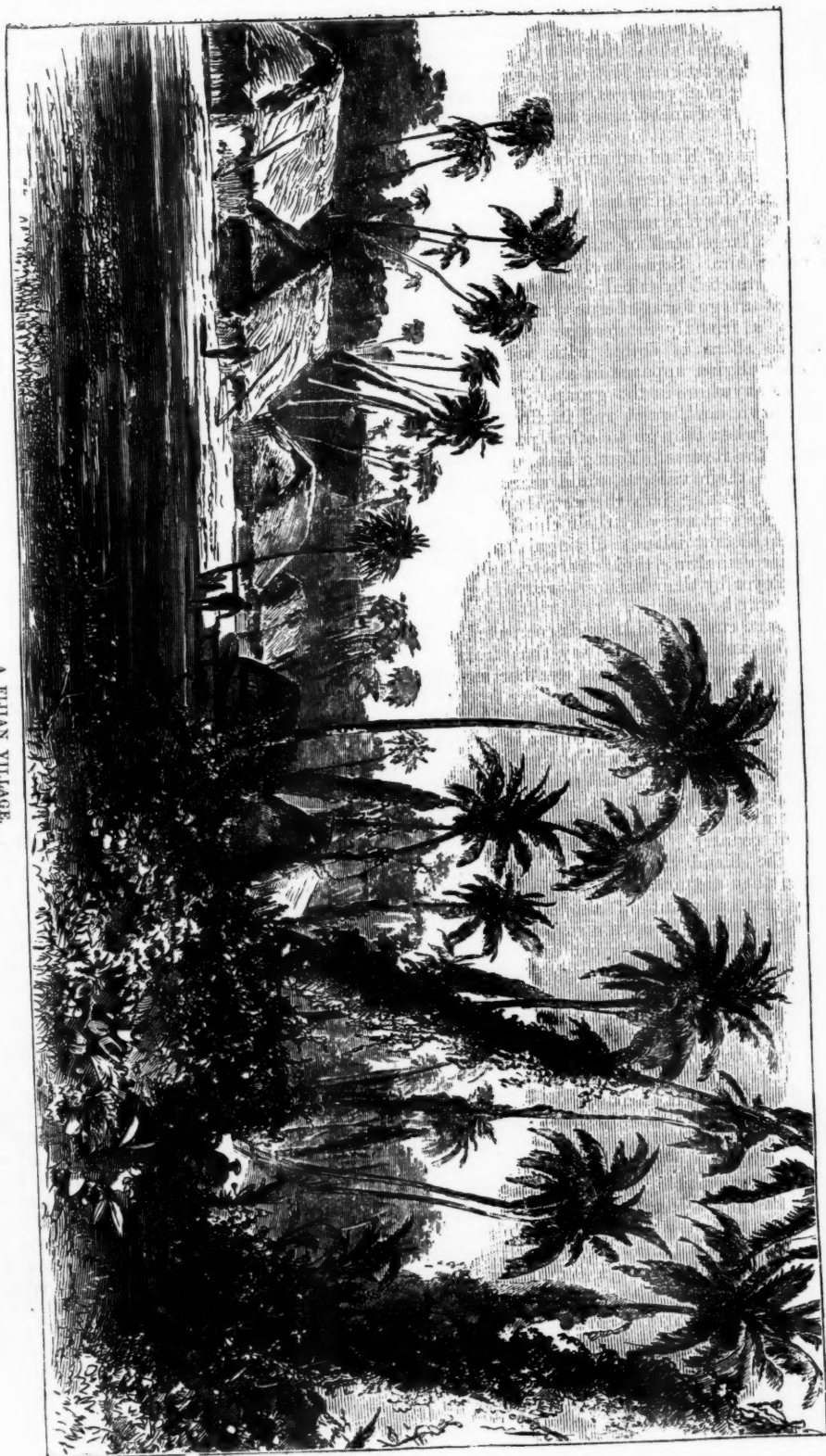
edging the whole with a great fringe of snowy surf.

The eastern end of the island is not attractive, but the pretty little archipelago that studs the ocean close by redeems the tameness. The finest harbour in the group carves out the middle of the island—



KING THAKOMBAU.

Galoa Bay. There is much here to please the lover of scenery, but its principal attractions are for ship-masters, for Yankee whalers, and large steamboats. Some care is needed when passing in or out through



A FIJIAN VILLAGE.

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the passage, and the mail steamship Macgregor, through starting when the glare of the early sun made the water a blaze of light, and rendered it impossible to distinguish shoal from deep, got on to a coral patch at the entrance. But then, care is needed for any of these reef passages, and, once entered, Galoa is the safest of anchorages, and has room for a navy to swing in.

The inhabitants of Kandavu number between 9,000 and 10,000, and there are but few white settlers amongst them. Christianity has prevailed here for years, and a Wesleyan missionary resides on the island, with a large staff of native ministers and teachers under him. Some twelve years ago the people were distracted by tribal feuds, and cannibalism in its most savage forms of cruelty raged amongst them. Now a friendly intercourse exists among them all, the shore is dotted with white native churches, and religion appears in as flourishing an aspect here as anywhere in the group. The natives are, in their own land, quiet and inoffensive; but, strange to say, when they go to other parts of Fiji they are quite the reverse. Young men, orderly and civil enough in their villages, could scarcely go to Levuka without getting into the watchhouse there; and such as were sent away by their chiefs to cotton plantations in distant islands distinguished themselves by either assaulting their overseer, half ruining their employer by their laziness, or stealing their boats to run away home in.

There are some curious old legends connected with Kandavu. The natives used to say that from its centre ridge they could in clearest weather see the Heavenly Land—Burotu; and men sailing from the Windward Isles to Kandavu have taken a cloud for the beautiful vision, and left their course in pursuit. A spirit-path runs along the whole length of the island (which is about twenty miles long), keeping in the centre of the land, and being remarkably free, it is said, from timber, although passing through thickly-wooded country. Up to this path fly the souls of all the Kandavu dead from the various villages where they die, and along it they travel to the extreme eastern point of the island, called Naigoro. Here they strike upon a rock with a club, and a double canoe rises partly out of the water. On this they step, and go down through the deep sea to Hades.

The high top of Nabukelevu was greatly feared in the olden time, for there, it was reported, dwelt a god, and scarcely any of the dwellers in the many villages round its base have been to the top. Men have grown old under that cloud-capped tower, and yet have never taken the trouble to go up and see what was above them. This may be accounted for partly by superstition, but more by laziness, which deters a Fijian from making any exertion without some definite practical object in view. There being no fruit up there, nor wild yams, the people cannot to this day imagine what they ought to climb the woody ascent for, and they laugh compassionately at the absurd white men who scramble up with sweat and labour and come down again with nothing in their hands. On an island close to Kandavu was the seat of the chief god, and this deity was in the habit of making predatory incursions on his neighbouring divinities and conquering them. He came down once upon the god of Nabukelevu, and driving him away, attempted to lift his great mountain throne to his own island of Ono—ambitious, perhaps, of so

elevated a seat. Such an achievement proved, however, too much for his strength, and he only succeeded in shaking the hill so much that several tons of earth fell from it, and formed the little islands which are scattered along the southern shore.

At the point of one of the bays on the northern coast is a mass of rocks, which, from its peculiar formation, was very suggestive to the native mind; and their old priests invented for them a legend respecting it. They said that an ancient god was taking a large feast to Bega (an island several miles away), and he heaped it properly upon the shore, and then proceeded to make a bridge upon which it might be carried to its destination. But his great engineering enterprise was unfortunately a complete failure, and the waves washed it irremediably away, so he left his feast there in despair. The yams, bananas, *madrai*, and the roast pig upon the top turned to stone, and in this fossilised condition they remain unto this day, together with a part of the projected pier. Once when food was scarce in Bega I told the people that there was a vast pile of food for them in Daku Bay, if they would only go and fetch it. For a time they stared; at last the meaning gently dawned upon their minds, and they burst into a roar of laughter.

The chief production of Kandavu is cocoa-nut oil, for its shores are richly provided with well-loaded palms. There are also candle-nuts in abundance, and kauri gum, and good timber. The valuable "greenheart" tree grows here, and the place is consequently a celebrated manufactory of canoes. There are a few who entertain the idea that there may be gold on the island, and have knocked their boots to pieces in hard tramps on the hills, but as yet they have found nothing but quartz. The conchologist would find richer "prospecting," for not only are there many kinds of shells to be found in abundance on the reefs, but there is one in particular which, I have heard, is known of nowhere else in the wide world but here. The beautiful green and blue opercula is found at Kandavu, but at one particular point only—close to the rolling surf, just under the presence of Nabukelevu himself. The commercial and other resources of Kandavu have yet to be opened up, and no doubt but in future years it will be one of the most pleasing and attractive parts of the group.

COTTON-PLANTING IN FIJI.

Another correspondent writes respecting cotton-planting in Fiji.

Without insulting the readers of the "Leisure Hour" by presuming any want of geographical knowledge on their part, I may venture here to remark that Fiji is a group of small islands situated about a thousand miles nearly due north from New Zealand, between 15° and 17° south latitude, and between 177° and 180° east longitude. The group consists of more than 200 islands, large and small, many of the smallest being mere barren rocks or sandbanks. Na Viti Levu, the largest island in the group, is said to be about the size of Wales, though to a resident in Fiji it would appear to be much larger. The next in size, Vanua Levu (Big land), a long narrow island, is perhaps about two-thirds the size of the former. None of the other islands are at all approaching to these two in size, the most important of the smaller ones being Taviuni, the location of the most successful cotton-planters, and Ovalau, important only as being situated in the centre

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of the group, and containing the commercial and political capital of the islands, Levuka, which is the only town inhabited by a European population. The name of *town* would to some persons appear to be inapplicable to a place containing probably not more than five hundred inhabitants, many of these only a moving population staying at the numerous hotels. The houses, as in most new colonial townships, are constructed entirely of wood, and generally roofed with galvanised corrugated iron.

The special inducements held out to enterprising men to engage in cotton-planting in the Fiji Islands were, cheapness of labour, fine climate, perennial crops, and high price of produce. Polynesian and native labourers could then be engaged at a cost to the planter of about four pounds sterling per annum, including the cost of maintenance; and while the American planter was obliged to replant every year, the cotton-plant in Fiji would continue to produce crops for several successive years. The South Australian farmer was content to receive a gross annual return of fifty shillings per acre for his wheat crop, and the South American was content with even two pounds per acre, while in Fiji cotton was said to return from £10 to £40 per acre.

With these advantages of cheap labour, cheap land, comparative freedom from insect pests, and large and speedy returns, it is not surprising that, in a time of commercial depression in the colonies, scores of young men of all ranks and professions—lawyers, doctors, bank clerks, run-holders, farmers, and storekeepers—were induced to try their fortunes at cotton-planting in the Fiji Islands. While some were influenced by a love for adventure and a weariness of the monotony of sedentary occupations, and others by a less creditable desire to rid themselves of the restraints and conventionalities of civilised life that they might give themselves up to sensual indulgence, or perhaps escape the consequences of folly or crime, all were led on by the hope of creating for themselves valuable estates as the result of a few years' toil and hardship.

The amount of capital said to be required for cotton-planting in Fiji was stated to be from £300 to £1,000, though many commenced with less than the smaller sum, and several invested two or three times as much as the larger. It was found, however, that the larger capitalists had the best chance of success, being better able to withstand adverse seasons and other reverses.

It would, indeed, have been very extraordinary, and altogether contrary to reasonable expectations, if it had turned out that every young man, however unfit from want of experience and other more essential qualifications, should have succeeded in making a fortune or even in earning a living. But among those who determined to make for themselves a home among the natives of Fiji were some men pre-eminently well qualified for coping successfully with the difficulties and dangers inseparable from all new enterprises in semi-barbarous countries—men whose previous training had prepared them for any emergency, whose ingenuity made them independent of skilled labour, and whose indomitable energy and perseverance would have achieved success in any undertaking. If such men do not succeed in Fiji it will prove that there are some disadvantages which the cotton-planter has to contend against which more than counterbalance the supposed advantages.

A fruitful cause of failure and misfortune has been the want of good judgment—or rather, perhaps, of skilled experience—in the selection of land suitable for the growth of cotton. In many cases men have expended their all and wasted years of arduous toil in futile attempts to grow cotton on barren hills which a Fijian native would consider to be absolutely valueless. As a general rule, the only lands in Fiji capable of growing cotton are the small bays on the coast covered with a marine deposit of coral sand and decomposed vegetable matter, the extensive alluvial flats on the banks of the large rivers, and the wooded hills, or, as Australians would say, the "bush." Wherever the common brake fern* is seen growing the land is considered by natives as unfit for cultivation, and has been proved by Europeans (to their cost) to be unsuitable for sea island cotton, though it may grow excellent crops of tapioca.

On timbered land, which in Fiji is generally hilly and often precipitous, it is only considered necessary, in order to prepare the land for cotton, to fell and burn off the timber, no digging or other cultivation of the soil being required other than slightly stirring the soil where the seeds are deposited. In such land it is customary to plant in rows eight feet or ten feet apart, and six feet apart in the rows. On the river flats, which are generally covered with grass or reeds, a more elaborate preparation of the soil is essential. On plantations where horses are used the land is broken up with the plough to a depth of from four to eight inches (the deeper the better), and, after a good harrowing, the seeds are planted in rows six feet apart, and three feet apart in the rows. Very light American ploughs are used afterwards between the rows to keep the soil loose and kill the weeds. Many, and indeed most, of the planters have no horses, and employ their labourers, either native Fijians or imported Polynesians, to dig the land. This is done by Fijians with *dokos*, or digging-sticks, which are from five to six feet in length, and about the size of a man's wrist. These sticks are pointed in a peculiar manner at one end, and are forced into the ground with both hands and then used as levers. Although but a very rude implement, it is surprising how much work can be accomplished with it in the hands of a skilful and powerful native. The cotton is weeded by the labourers with light American hoes, which they soon learn to use with considerable dexterity. Weeds grow with such astonishing rapidity in the tropics, that, next to picking, the weeding is the most important and laborious operation on the plantation.

November and December are considered the best months for planting, and cotton planted then should yield its first heavy crop in the following July, August, and September. The second crop comes on in December and January, which are rainy months, the rainy season extending from November to April, the other months being generally fine and dry, with cool south-east breezes. Experience has proved that there is no very great advantage in allowing the trees to go on bearing for several years, as after the first two pickings the cotton deteriorates both in length and strength of staple. It will probably be found most advantageous to plant every second year, thus picking three crops from the same trees.

The boll-worm, which is very troublesome to the

* This fern is not considered an indication of bad soil in New Zealand, but the height to which it grows (sometimes six or eight feet) is a good criterion of the fertility of the soil.

American planter, did not at first show itself to any extent in Fiji. Latterly it has been very destructive to the crops, often the half, and sometimes three-fourths, of the pods being pierced by it. I have taken some pains to ascertain whether this pest is likely to have been imported or whether it is indigenous, and my observations have led me to the conclusion that it is indigenous, the moth of the one having four legs and the moth of the other six, and there being also a great difference in the appearance of the grub. The insect has probably always existed in the islands, but it has only become numerous since the introduction of its natural food. From 600lb. to 1,200lb. of seed cotton, yielding from 150lb. to 300lb. of lint, is considered a fair annual yield per acre, but the uncertainty of the seasons and the heavy rains render it impossible to make any sure calculations of what the crops are likely to yield.

Many of the planters live in houses constructed for them by the Fijians, with wooden posts, bamboo rafters, and thatch of grass or reeds. Others have dwellings and cotton-houses built of sawn timber and roofed with galvanised iron.

The Polynesian labourers employed in Fiji have been brought from the New Hebrides, Tokalau, Solomon Islands, and many other groups, and are usually engaged to work for three years. Although some of these have no doubt been procured by unfair means, they are not, as some represent them to be, slaves. The majority of them are much better off in every respect than they were in their own homes, and many of them return a second time to Fiji to work on plantations.

Some particulars relating to the so-called King Thakombau, whose portrait we give, will be found in the paper to which we have already referred.* Thakombau, or Kacabau, as he is variously called, was born in 1817. He was the son of Tanoa, King of Bau, one of the most cruel of all the rulers of Fiji. A missionary thus describes Tanoa as he saw him in 1850:—"At the first interview, I said, in Fijian, 'Let me live at Bau, sir.' An emphatic 'No' in English was the instant reply of the chief. On that occasion he could well have been compared to Lucifer for pride. He was almost naked, which added to the appearance of his great stature; his face was painted up to the eyes; his massive head of hair covered with a white gauze turban; his beard, of great length, bore evident marks of having been carefully dressed. A score of armed men, who all looked like professional cut-throats, followed closely at his heels." Early in 1854 Thakombau so far yielded to the force of truth as publicly to disown idolatry and give permission to the various islands to embrace Christianity. At the present time the Wesleyan Methodists have in the islands 25,468 church members, with 4450 on trial, 52 native ministers, and more than 49,000 children in their schools.

FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP.

ESSAYS innumerable have been written on this subject, which has been a standing theme for writers in all ages; and yet there always remains something new, or that seems to be new, to be said

about it. The difficulty in treating of it is to avoid triteness and stumbling into old ruts and wheel-tracks worn by the multitude who have gone before us. Were we to set out with a definition of friendship we might glide unawares into a sea of platitudes wearisome even to think of. That, therefore, we shall pretermit—with the reader's concurrence, no doubt—trusting that by the time we have set down a few thoughts on the matter we may have arrived at the essence of a definition without formally stating it. To begin: we all have friends and friendships, after some fashion or other, and perhaps the truth may be that a man can only have such a friend as he is capable of being—that in this particular the Protagorean maxim is true, and each and all of us are the measure of our own friendships. The eye that looks upon nature or art sees what it has the capacity of seeing, and no more; the ear that listens to harmony hears what it has been gifted or educated to hear, and only that; and in an analogous way, a man's intellectual and moral capabilities have their limits, which must of necessity determine the bounds of his sympathy, and therefore the capacity that is in him for friendship. We do not set this down as an invariable rule, knowing that the exceptions to it are happily numerous in human experience, but it has a claim to consideration, and may be taken for what it is worth.

Friendship has been compared with love, of which it should always be the basis; but the comparison, it is plain, does not commend itself to all minds. With the young a friendship often takes the form and has the energy of a passion, and with those who are privileged to preserve their youth in spite of years it may continue to be a passion, because they keep alive the spirit of self-abnegation and self-devotion which make it a passion. Such people will tell you that those who think that friendship is not a passion know nothing about it, and that it is the sole passion which age does not deaden. But these boasters, we imagine, are the exceptionally fortunate few. Further, we have an idea that for the most part they are a little deceived—at least, we have observed in some cases of the kind that when the grand passion sweeps in upon the scene, the fire of friendship is very apt to pale and grow dim. Especially is it so with the "lords of the creation"—that it is not so in an equal degree with the softer sex may be owing to the desire, the imperious necessity for sympathy, confidence, and counsel, which women naturally feel in the great crises of their lives, and which they find in a friend.

It was a shrewd remark of a witty Frenchwoman that we go in search of new friends when our old friends know us too well. The truth, or modicum of truth, involved in this dictum, is not at all an agreeable one to contemplate or to accept, though one may pick a useful lesson out of it. We may strive to give it the lie in our own experience by avoiding such dreary interchanges of thought and feeling as are apt to make friends weary of each other. It is altogether a mistake to imagine that even our nearest friend should know everything appertaining to us; there is no confidence impaired by the withholding of what is painful, frivolous, and disagreeable. There are a thousand things occurring in life which it were impertinence to share with another, because they are things which, whether trifling or important, are so only in relation to ourselves. It is the frivolous-minded folk who turn everything into talk

* See "Leisure Hour" for 1872, page 165.

that weary out their old friends and then sigh for new ones. With many persons friendship, or what passes for friendship, endures for years or for life, simply because the subjects of them practise a wise reticence or they do not meet very often, and have not the time or the opportunity of wearying one another out. How often does it come to pass that Brown and Jones, who have been fast friends for years so long as circumstances held them apart, have speedily quarrelled and become estranged for ever after other circumstances had thrown them continuously together!

It will be admitted that there is no greater gratification in life than the assured friendship of one whom upon solid grounds we both admire and esteem. We can love such a friend as fully as ourselves, and can strive as eagerly for his advantage as for our own. Though we need not be blind to his faults, we should prefer to look only at the beautiful side of his character—feeling with regard to him as the connoisseur feels, who, contemplating the works of art in his possession, looks only at their finest traits and ignores the feebler ones. The more we give to friendship in such cases the more we gain—we grow wealthy in giving. Giving, indeed, in friendship as in love, is the condition of receiving—to reap the advantages we must fulfil the obligations of friendship. These obligations are twofold, comprising the mutual participation both of pleasures and of pains. Whoever imparts but one side of his life to another can have but the half of the other's friendship. To keep back anything that deeply wounds or grieves is as much a fraud upon friendship as it would be to monopolise any new source of pleasure and satisfaction.

Among true friends there is no imperiousness. Friendship is courteous and gentle; it does not domineer, does not command, but is satisfied with proposing without exacting compliance. At the same time it is indefatigable in labour when labour can achieve a friendly purpose. A friend will overleap the barriers of ceremony and etiquette, and sweep aside conventionalities of all kinds, rather than fail of the purpose in hand. The grass is not allowed to grow under the feet of a man who works in his friend's interest. Such eager work is sometimes among the grandest spectacles the world offers to view.

By friendship man is strong and mighty to great deeds—yet is it none the less a delicate plant, difficult of culture and subject to sudden and destroying blights. A word, a look, a single lapse of memory, may suffice to break the bond which calamity or loss, separation and distance, would fail to sever. Lost friendships are amongst the saddest things in the memory, and there are probably few persons who have passed the meridian of life, who do not sometimes ponder pensively—not on the friendships death has abruptly severed, for the sadness of such thoughts is tempered with a solemn resignation, but on those which have in some way severed themselves—how, it is hardly possible to say—never to reunite again.

There is an old proverb which says, "Lend your money, lose your friend." It seems a libel in the very nature of friendship to admit the truth and force of a maxim so hard and practical, and yet the admission must be made if we will not reject the experience of every day. Why should the borrowing and the lending of money be such a source of

disruption between friends? The reason is sufficiently apparent if we reflect a little. It is not because a friend is a harder creditor or a more lax debtor than another—it is rather because the relation of debtor and creditor is incompatible with that of friend and friend, save in exceptional cases, and therefore the two relations ought never to be suffered to merge in each other. With ordinary men (we do not mean this in a disparaging sense) the right thing would be to keep to business principles in all transactions of business, setting friendship aside. Otherwise the chances of misunderstanding and ultimate disagreement and rupture are many. If friendship comes into the account, both parties look for friendly consideration; the lender thinks that a friend will be bound by his goodwill and personal regard to make prompt payment; the borrower thinks that a friend will not be over particular about punctuality; and the result is that each is likely to be disappointed in the other, and thus the seeds of alienation and disruption are sown. There is sound philosophy in that identical proposition, "business is business," so often in the mouths of men of the world, and it is susceptible of application even among friends.

The quarrels of friends, from whatever source they arise, are fraught with the heaviest crosses in the human lot—all the harder to bear when the cause of quarrel has to be sought in the waywardness or infirmity of the alienated parties. Among the more obvious causes, besides that already mentioned, are frailties of temper, want of sympathy, breaches of confidence through thoughtlessness, the betrayal of secrets, and failure in the practice of that candour and outspoken frankness which are implied in the very existence of close amicable relations. "Wit is often the assassin of friendship," says a writer of the last century, and it is very certain that the man of sharp sayings and ready and caustic repartee runs constant risk of wounding his friends with the shafts which he launches indiscriminately. Wits who cannot keep a tight reign on their fancy are generally found to have few lasting friends—their mere intimates holding them for the most part in a manner at arm's length—the favourites and the pets of society, they are apt to be anything but favourites in their homes. But if too free a wit is hostile to friendship, too demonstrative a wisdom is no less so. Average human nature will not put up with the constant rebuke administered by the perfection of sagacity, of conduct, of manners, of anything. One cannot be on loving terms with people who have no faults, seeing that from such people we could look for no toleration for our own. We may applaud, and in some sort admire the model individual, but we rarely open our hearts to him or covet his closer friendship. It is too frequently the little agreeable faults we allow ourselves that first attract us in others. But on the other hand, many are attracted by contrasts, and admire in others the qualities in which they feel themselves deficient.

A common doom of human friendships is to be put to death by "the whispering tongues that poison truth"—a doom which would often be avoided by the exercise of frankness and candour, and a mutual face-to-face clearing up of matters, which in most cases both parties want the diffidence and the Christian humility to move in bringing about. Instead of meeting for explanation when injurious rumours are flying about, the too common and fatal practice is to

commence a correspondence on the subject, probably with the idea that the explanation can be conducted more calmly and dispassionately by writing than by speech. This is the most delusive idea that a man can entertain. In such a case never write to your offended friend, but go to him and, as plain people phrase it, "have it out," honestly and unreservedly face to face. If you write, "*littera scripta manet*," and though you wrote with the eloquence of an angel, the jealous eye of offence will discern, it is likely, some cause of aggravation in your written words; but the chances are that you will not write so eloquently or persuasively as you ought, and that you may only irritate the wound it is your wish to heal. Is it a coming-down on your part, do you think, to make the first advances?—then prove the sincerity of your friendship for him, and the value you set on his for you, by coming down, and never dream that you lose any advantage by so doing.

In the matter of secrets between friends, it is not easy to lay down any definite rule. "Do not tell me any secret unless you are absolutely obliged to do so," said a wise friend to the writer; and it is surely well to escape from being the depository of another man's secrets as far as possible. But there are cases in which it is not possible to refuse a confidence offered, as there are also cases in which the neglect to impart a secret, even though it be unsought, is a violation of friendship. What is very provoking, and often leads to quarrels, is the odd habit which characterises some people of confiding their secret grievances to mere acquaintances, and afterwards committing them as a "sacred trust" to the sympathising guardianship of a bosom friend. It is inevitable that the friend so favoured should feel himself offended when he finds out, as he is sure to do at some time or other, that the secret confided to his solemn observance is already blown and stale to the world at large.

A source of disagreement which can hardly be passed over is the officiousness which misjudging friends are apt to manifest under impulses which they would do better to control. Who has not had to exclaim, at some time or other, "Save me from my friends"? Of all kinds of interference, that of a friend who intermeddles with the best intentions is the most difficult to deal with. You think of discouraging such interference, perhaps, by ignoring it, or receiving the spontaneous kindness very coolly, but that is set down to your modesty, and only serves to redouble your friend's energies. So you have to submit to be helped the wrong way, and perhaps in the end you find your purpose, whatever it may be, defeated by the ill-judged efforts intended to crown it with success. The worst is, that after your defeat the enthusiastic author of your overthrow claims both your gratitude and your sympathy for his misapplied labour and zeal.

As years steal upon us, and we come to tread the downward way towards the narrow house, our ideas of friends and friendships undergo a change, which change we may not recognise very readily, but still, in moments of reflection, we are conscious that it has occurred. As we look back upon the long route we have travelled, we can but think of the "troops of friends" who at one time or other were the companions of the journey, and we ask, "Where are they? What has become of them all?" Some are away in foreign lands, and severed from us for ever; some we have estranged from us, it may be by our

own faults and shortcomings; some have cast us off, having themselves stepped higher up in the social scale; and some we have ourselves designedly relinquished, not, we trust, because they have not kept pace with us in the worldly race, but either because they were such ties as we ought never to have formed, or because through vice or the force of temptation they have fallen too low. Then there are one or two, perhaps, who were in times past the treasure and glory of our life, whom one fatal mistake wrenched from us in evil hour, and ever since we have stood aloof, "like cliffs which had been rent asunder," both of us, perchance, retaining the scars which "neither frost, nor heat, nor thunder" shall wholly do away. It is such remembrances as these which, in the autumn and winter of our days, make us wary and watchful over the too scanty remainder of our life's friendships. Gladly, if we could, would we bridge over that dreary sea which flows between us and the alienated friends of past years; but that cannot be done—never was done yet in human experience—and so, accepting wisdom from the past, we guard the love that is left to us all the more jealously. We come to hate all quarrels and resentments as the folly and absurdity and dreary results of them come home to us in those lone hours when, regretfully confronting the past, we can review the game of life and recall with bitterness the many false moves we made and the sorrows they entailed upon us. Well for us that all is not loss—that friendly hands yet aid us in doing and suffering what has yet to be done and suffered, and friendly hearts yet flow with the sympathy we have learned to prize at its just value.

THE TOMB OF THE HOLY DONKEYS.

ONCE upon a time there was a great Sheikh Ali, a holy man, who kept a holy tomb of an ancient prophet. The tomb was on a hill, under a big oak-tree, and the white dome could be seen for miles around. Lamps were kept burning day and night in the tomb, and if any one extinguished them they were miraculously lighted again. Men with sore eyes came to visit it and were cured. The earth around the tomb was carried off to be used as a medicine. Women came and tied old rags on the limbs of the tree, as vows to the wonderful prophet. Nobody knew the name of the prophet, but the tomb was called "Kobr en Nebi," or "Tomb of the Prophet." A green cloth was spread over the tomb under the dome, and incense was sold by the Sheikh to those who wished to heal their sick, or drive out evil spirits from their houses. Pilgrims came from afar to visit the holy place, and its fame extended over all the land. Sheikh Ali was becoming a rich man, and all the pilgrims kissed his hand and begged his blessing. Now Sheikh Ali had a faithful servant named Mohammed, who had served him long and well. But Mohammed was weary of living in one place, and asked permission to go and seek his fortune in distant parts. So Sheikh Ali gave him his blessing and presented him with a donkey, which he had for many years, that he might ride when tired of walking.

Then Mohammed, thus provided, set out on his journey. He went through cities and towns and villages, and at last came out on the mountains east of the Jordan in a desert place. No village or house was in sight,

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and night came on. Tired, hungry, and discouraged, poor Mohammed lay down by his donkey on a great pile of stones, and fell asleep. In the morning he awoke, and, alas! his donkey was dead. He was in despair, but his kindly nature would not let the poor brute lie there to be devoured by jackals and vultures, so he piled a mound of stones over its body, and sat down to weep.

While he was weeping a wealthy Hajji, or pilgrim, came along, on his return from Mecca. He was surprised to see a man alone in this wilderness, and asked him why he was weeping. Mohammed replied, "O Hajji, I have found the tomb of a holy prophet, and I have vowed to be its keeper; but I am in great need." The Hajji thanked him for the news, and dismounted to visit the holy place, and gave Mohammed a rich present. After he had gone Mohammed hastened to the nearest village and bought provisions, and then returned to the holy prophet's tomb. The Hajji spread the news, and pilgrims thronged to the spot with rich presents and offerings. As money came in Mohammed brought masons and built a costly tomb, with a tall white dome that could be seen across the Jordan. He lived in a little room by the tomb, and soon the miraculous lights began to appear in the tomb at night, which Mohammed had kindled when no one was near. He increased in fame and wealth, and the prophet's tomb came to be regarded as one of the great shrines of the land.

At length Sheikh Ali heard of the fame of the new holy place in the desert, and as his own visitors began to fall off, decided to go himself and gain the merit of a visit to the tomb of that famous prophet. When he arrived there with his rich presents of green cloth, incense, and money, he bowed in silence to pray towards Mecca, when suddenly he recognised in the holy keeper of the tomb his old servant Mohammed. "Salam alaykoom," said Sheikh Ali. "Alaykoom es salam," replied Mohammed. When he asked him how he came here, and how he found this tomb, Mohammed replied, "This tomb is a great 'sirr,' or mystery, and I am forbidden to utter the secret." "But you *must* tell me," said Sheikh Ali, "for I am a father to you." Mohammed refused and Ali insisted, until at length Mohammed said, "My honoured Sheikh, you remember having given me a donkey. It was a faithful donkey, and when it died I buried it. This is the tomb of that donkey!" "Mashallah! Mashallah!" said Sheikh Ali, "the will of Allah be done!" Then they ate and drank together, and renewed the memory of their former life, and then Sheikh Mohammed said to Sheikh Ali, "My master, as I have told you the 'sirr' of my prophet's tomb, I wish to know the secret of yours." "Impossible," said Ali, "for that is one of the ancient mysteries, too sacred to be mentioned by mortal lips." "But you *must* tell me, even as I have told you." At length the old Sheikh Ali stroked his snowy beard, adjusted his white turban, and whispered to Mohammed, "And my holy place is the tomb of that donkey's father!" "Mashallah," said Mohammed, "may Allah bless the beard of the holy donkeys!"

This story is told by Dr. Jessop, long a missionary in Syria, who has written a book on "The Women of the Arabs" (Low and Co.). He tells of the amusements of their children, of their songs, and games, and nursery rhymes, and legends, and other features of their family life.

Varieties.

OYSTERS.—Many opinions are offered as to the cause of oysters being comparatively scarce and monstrously dear. The common-sense view of the case is given by Mr. Francis Francis, in a letter to the "Times":—"The beds are overdredged, and need protection by law. This must be dealt with firmly if we are ever to have oysters any cheaper. The engines are too severe, and must be restricted. Added to this, in order to restore the beds, breeding grounds should be buoyed off in places which should not be dredged at all, but put under the charge of the coastguard. A suitable fence time should be enacted and enforced, and all oysters under a certain size should be thrown back, as was largely the custom in former years. To show how splendid fisheries can be ruined, let me cite the case of the Channel Islands. I am entitled to speak with some authority upon that subject, as my late father, Captain John Morgan, R.N., had the charge of these fisheries for nine years in their early and prosperous days. In 1857, 200 boats and smacks were engaged in the fisheries, and the take amounted to 180,000 tubs of oysters, a tub being about twenty-six gallons. It only required seven years of over-fishing to reduce this to twenty-three boats and 3,000 tubs of oysters. At Concale, in 1847, 71,000,000 oysters were taken, and seventeen years of steady over-fishing progressively reduced them to 1,000,000; yet the temperature of summer did not steadily reduce itself during the same period, and the wind blew much the same as usual, and the principle that you cannot over-dredge a bed was freely acted on."

PAVED WITH GOLD.—The "Melbourne Argus" says:—"It may appear rather strange to say that the streets of this colony are paved with gold, yet there is no doubt that on some of our mining townships, where the tailings or quartz crushings are used for street roadways or footpaths, the saying might be applied, though only in a limited sense. Mr. E. Marks, of the laboratory, Bendigo School of Mines, gives the 'Bendigo Advertiser' the following information:—"From numerous places along the roadway of High Street and Pall Mall I collected a parcel of the tailings or blindings so liberally spread by the City Council, and having well mixed them, I selected a portion for assay, with the following result:—1lb. weight treated in the laboratory yielded 1-16th of a grain of gold equal to 5dwt. 20gr. per ton. From official sources I learn that about 250 tons of the tailings have been distributed, by which you will see that 5lb. 10oz. troy of gold may fairly be assumed to enter into the composition of our street paving."

AMERICAN IDEAS VERSUS BRITISH IDEAS.—An amusing instance of the contrast between American and English ideas, as well as of the American method of "cooking" English books, has been made known by Dr. William Chambers, of Edinburgh, the well-known publisher. A duplicate set of stereotype plates of "Chambers's Encyclopedia" was sent to Messrs. Lippincott, of Philadelphia, in order that the work might be simultaneously printed and issued in the United States. After a time, the American publishers began to make extensive alterations in the articles, a thing which had not been contemplated in the agreement. Statements and opinions were introduced which were repudiated, and most hateful to the original proprietors, their name all the while appearing on the title-page, and against which remonstrance was unavailable. From a number of improper alterations, the following, as a specimen, are selected:—Free Trade (*Original Edition*). "This term, when used so late as twenty years ago, expressed a disputed proposition, and was the badge of a political party; it now expresses the most important and fundamental truth in political economy. From its simplicity it affords, to those who expect to make political economy an exact science, the hope that they have obtained an axiom. But it has in reality been established as the result of a double experience—the one being the failure of all deviations from it, the other the practical success of the principle during the short period in which it has been permitted to regulate the commerce of the country."—Free Trade (*American Edition*). "A dogma of modern growth, industriously taught by British manufacturers and their commercial agents. For many years certain political economists have laboured to establish this theory upon a reliable basis, and have asserted that the doctrine represents an important truth; but no nation has attained substantial prosperity except by protection to native industry, whether avowed or disavowed. The sophistries of free trade are put

forth to lull the suspicions of the deluded purveyors to the wealth of England, and are advocated most strenuously by agents of British manufacturing houses and foreign residents in our cities, whose chief aim is the accumulation of wealth by extensive sales of foreign products, regardless of the injury they may inflict on American interests." With a great deal more to the same purpose—an entire perversion of the original. Protection—Protection Duty (*Original Edition*). "In Political Economy, terms applied to a practice, now in disuse in Britain, of discouraging, by heavy duties and otherwise, the importation of foreign goods, under the notion that such a practice increased the prosperity of the country at large." Protection—Protection Duty (*American Edition*). "In Political Economy, terms applied to a practice, found necessary in the United States, of discouraging, by heavy duties and otherwise, the importation of foreign goods, it having been proved that such a practice increases the prosperity of the country at large." A much more serious perversion occurs under the article Victoria I, when referring to the prosperous condition of the United Kingdom during her reign:—*Original Edition*—"The progress made by the nation in the various elements of civilisation, especially in that of material prosperity, has been unparalleled (see Great Britain); and perhaps during no reign has a greater measure of political contentment been enjoyed." *American Edition*—"The progress made by the nation in the various elements of civilisation, especially in that of material prosperity, has been unparalleled (see Great Britain); but a growing discontent under her unequal institutions, and a progress towards Republicanism, are plainly apparent." These alterations may have been expedient for the American market, but Messrs. Chambers may justly complain of such falsifications of the original being issued under their name.

HOSPITAL SATURDAY.—At the very inception of the Hospital Saturday movement in London we counselled caution, and expressed our great apprehension that it would have the effect of conferring upon all the opulent artisan class of the metropolis the right to demand hospital attendance and medicine in consideration of their donation of a sum which is utterly insignificant when placed beside the weekly expenditure of the same class for liquor and tobacco. We are sorry to observe that the result has realised our worst expectations. In spite of the benevolent, though probably mistaken, efforts of Archbishop Manning and other gentlemen, in spite of the banners and processions and street-stalls, and all the other adjuncts to the getting up of charity steam, which cost no less than £1,100, the artisans have not contributed one-tenth of a farthing per annum per man. This is the spectacle cut by that great class which is to revolutionise everything, and which numbers its hundreds of thousands in the receipt of plentiful wages—this the contribution to charities founded and maintained specially for their benefit. A penny per week for twelve months would have yielded £100,000. And what do they give? We are ashamed to mention the sum—it is such a miserable attempt at liberality; and yet it entitles each artisan to button up his pocket, spend the doctor's fee on some article of luxury, and hire him as a subscriber to any charity in the metropolis. No matter; the wire-pullers have been advertised to their heart's content, and surely that is something for the money, even though they have been compelled to appeal to the wealthy to defray the expenses of the fund.—*Medical Press and Circular*.

BEGINNING AT THE RIGHT PLACE.—Mr. Boerrisen, the Danish Missionary, whose labours among the Sonthal aborigines of India have been very successful, called upon a tradesman to "beg" for the mission. The tradesman said, "Preach to Europeans, and try to convert them before you meddle with the heathen." "Very good," Mr. Boerrisen replied, "I will do so, and perhaps I could not do better than begin here if you have no objection." Thereupon he began to preach. The matter ended by the tradesman giving the subscription.

PERMISSIVE BILL.—Sir Wilfred Lawson in a speech has given authoritative statement of the object of the leaguers:—They did not propose a Maine law. The Permissive Bill was merely this: They did not deal with the power of granting licences by the magistrates, but if there was a district or a village in Yorkshire, or a ward in the town of Bradford, where a large majority of the inhabitants were of opinion that drink-shops caused pauperism, crime, and misery, and they were better without them, then they said, let the people have the legal means of expressing that opinion to the magistrates, and then the magistrates shall not be allowed to issue the licences. This was simply carrying out Mr. Gladstone's notion of the principle of local option. They gave the people the option of vetoing the sale of drink, and they did not give them the option

of increasing it. People said they did not give them the alternative, but he never heard of a demand for more public-houses.

RHINE WINES.—Within the last year or two there has been an invasion of travellers seeking orders for Rhine wines. These importunate commercials are not satisfied with "the trade," but thrust themselves into merchants' counting-houses to solicit orders. Most of these Rhine wines are of value similar to "Hamburgh Sherry." A Strasbourg paper tells of the production of artificial wine at Kehl, where there is a large establishment much patronised by Strasbourg wine merchants, into which a grape has never entered. This coloured and sweetened Rhine water is recognised by the Excise as "grape wine." In the Rheingau and the Palatinate there are hundreds of similar establishments. The Rhenish and Alsatian wine-growers intend to urge the Reichstag to pass a stringent law against the falsification of wine and other drinks. It is evidently time to do something with these "wine" manufacturers.

EMIGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS TO AMERICA.—The late Rev. W. Robinson, formerly minister of the Baptist Chapel at Cambridge, who died last year while travelling in America, in a letter written to certain members of the University of Cambridge, made allusion to the prospects which await an agricultural labourer emigrating to that country. Mr. Robinson, who wrote from Wiota, Iowa, was a perfectly disinterested witness, and from his remarks a tolerably good idea can be gathered of what the agricultural labourer is likely to meet with on emigrating to America. In his letter, Mr. Robinson, alluding to this subject, said:—"The soil for cultivation is a deep virgin mould, quite free from stones. The same capital required to rent a farm of 200 acres in England will make a man his own landlord here, only he must put his own hand to the plough, reaping machine, etc. The good farm labourer who comes here without money will readily earn £1 a week, and board and lodging, for nine months in the year, but let him expect ten years' hard struggle or more before he is able to go alone, even on a small scale."

SCIENCE IN SCHOOLS.—Language was, no doubt, a most important part of education, but it was not education. It was even essential; and not only was Latin interesting from the light which it threw on our own mother tongue, but, in the opinion of competent authorities, Latin grammar was the best of all grammars for the purpose of education. To abandon the study of classical literature would be a fatal mistake, which men of science would certainly never advocate. But was it the case that the classics had been found to suffer when science was introduced? Quite the contrary. The Head Master of Wellington told us that "the good effect on that school is undeniable." Mr. Percival, again, gave it as the result of his great experience that "the introduction of science has not in any way interfered with the successful pursuit of old studies." Assuming six hours for science, six hours for mathematics, and two for geography, this would still leave eighteen hours a week—the lion's share—for the study of language. He omitted religious instruction, assuming that this would be given on Sunday. It was sometimes said that under such circumstances the amount of science acquired would be but a mere smattering; but it was a mistake to confuse "elementary" with "superficial" knowledge. The latter, no doubt, was useless, if not injurious; the former was the necessary beginning of all knowledge, and, however elementary, might be made to be thorough as far as it went.—*Sir John Lubbock*.

GOLD AND SILVER.—An American paper, citing an estimate of Dr. Linderman, the director of the United States Mint, that the stock of gold and silver in use in the world is from 10,000,000,000 dols. to 12,000,000,000 dols., and the present rate of production about 1½ per cent. of the existing stock, observes that, supposing the population of the world to be about 1,300,000,000, there is about 8.46 dols. to each man, woman, and child on the face of the globe; or, deducting savages, who make almost no use of the precious metals, it will be within bounds to say that there are at least ten dollars to each man, woman, and child in those portions of the globe where gold and silver are used to any considerable extent, either as money or for ornament or in the useful arts. The United States, although containing little more than 3 per cent. of the population of the globe, and less than 4 per cent. of the inhabitants who may be supposed to use the precious metals, yet supply 40 per cent. of the 180,000,000 dols., the estimated annual product of those metals. The amount of specie actually in the United States, estimated at 167,000,000 dols., is only about 4 dols. for each person, or 40 per cent. of what it would be if there were an equal distribution of the world's total stock.

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